

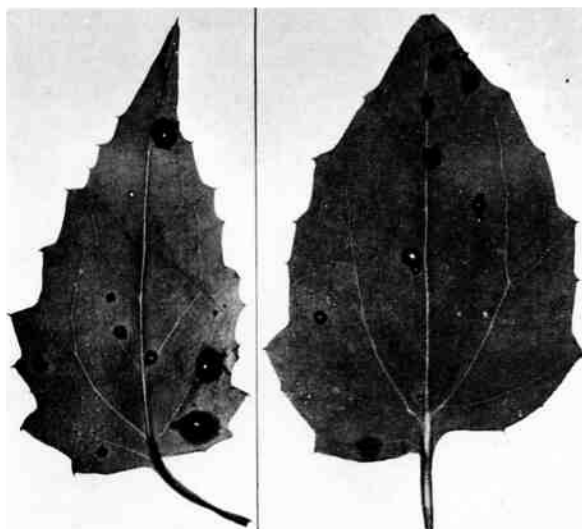
ALTERNARIA LEAFSPOT OF *SENECIO CONFUSUS*

E. K. Sobers

INTRODUCTION. During the spring of 1963, leaf specimens of *Senecio confusus* Britten. (Mexican flame vine) exhibiting lesions caused by *Alternaria senecionis* Neergaard, were received from District Inspectors J. C. Sellers at Brooksville and C. R. Roberts at Orange City.

The fungus was first described by Neergaard (3) as occurring on seeds and leaves of *Senecio cruentus* DC. (Cineraria) plants shipped to Denmark from France and Germany. Economic losses resulted from severe leaf blighting of mature plants and pre-emergence damping-off of seedlings. Other out-breaks of this disease have been reported from Great Britain, New Zealand, and California. The California occurrence was apparently not a serious one as it received only cursory mention (1).

SYMPTOMATOLOGY. Lesions first appear as dark green water-soaked spots 1-2 mm diam. Under optimum conditions these spots become light to medium brown and enlarge with a considerable area of water-soaked tissue (5-10 mm) surrounding the lesion. Affected leaves wither and die within a week after initial appearance of lesions. The most frequently observed lesions, however, are those with gray to light tan centers, depressed, surrounded by wide reddish-purple margins, and measuring 2-10 mm diam. (Fig. 1).



DISTRIBUTION. In addition to the recent findings at Brooksville and Orange City, it is probable that the disease may be found in Crescent City, Fort Pierce, and Tampa, based on symptoms contained in 3 reports dating back to 1956.

CONTROL. During the cut-break occurring in Great Britain, Green and Hewlett (2) determined that the disease could be controlled by spraying with colloidal copper plus an appropriate spreader. No phytotoxicity was noted. Fixed copper, zineb, or mancozeb should also control the disease. This should be applied as soon as first symptoms are noted and continued at 2-week intervals as long as new lesions are found. Since the fungus fruits readily, diseased leaves should be removed and burned as often as possible.

Fig. 1. Lesions on leaves of leaves of *Senecio confusus* Britten, caused by *Alternaria senecionis* Neerg.

Literature Cited

- (1) Baker, K. F. and L. H. Davis. 1950. Some diseases of ornamental plants in California caused by species of *Alternaria* and *Stemphylium*. Plant Dis. Reptr. 34:403-413.
- (2) Green, D. E. and M. A. Hewlett. 1950. A leaf spot disease of *Cineraria* (*Senecio cruentus*) new to Great Britain. J. R. Hort. Soc. 75:199-202.
- (3) Neergaard, P. 1945. Danish species of *Alternaria* and *Stemphylium*. Oxford Univ. Press, London. 560 p.